

Amendments to the Claims

1-55. (Cancelled)

56. (New) A communication system, comprising:

a first switching system coupled to a first connection and to a second connection and configured to transfer first communications for a first call over the first connection and to transfer second communications for a second call over the second connection when the first connection is unavailable for the second call;

a second switching system coupled to the first connection and to a third connection and configured to receive the first communications for the first call over the first connection and to receive the second communications for the second call over the third connection;

an asynchronous matrix coupled to a first link, to the second connection, and to the third connection and configured to receive a control message over the first link, to receive the second communications for the second call over the second connection, and to route the second communications for the second call to the third connection using an asynchronous connection in response to the control message; and

a signaling processor coupled to the first link and to a second link and configured to receive an initial address message for the second call from the second link, to process the initial address message to select the asynchronous connection, to indicate the asynchronous connection in the control message, and to transfer the control message to the first link.

57. (New) The communications system of claim 56 wherein the first connection, the second connection, and the third connection use a time division multiplex protocol and wherein the asynchronous matrix further includes a first interworking unit configured to convert the communications for the second call from the time division multiplex protocol to an asynchronous protocol and a second interworking unit configured to convert the communications for the second call from the asynchronous protocol back to the time division multiplex protocol.

58. (New) The communications system of claim 56 wherein the asynchronous matrix further includes an interworking unit configured to convert the communications for the second call into an asynchronous protocol.

59. (New) The communications system of claim 56 wherein the asynchronous matrix is configured to cancel echo from the communications for the second call.

60. (New) The communications system of claim 56 wherein the signaling processor is configured to process the initial address message to select echo cancellation and to indicate the echo cancellation in the control message and wherein the asynchronous matrix is configured to cancel echo from the second communications for the second call in response to the control message.

61. (New) The communications system of claim 56 wherein the signaling processor is configured to process the initial address message to select the third connection for the second call and to indicate the third connection in the control message.

62. (New) The communications system of claim 56 wherein the signaling processor is configured to process a called number or a calling number in the initial address message to select the asynchronous connection.

63. (New) The communications system of claim 56 wherein the asynchronous matrix is non-resident to the signaling processor.

64. (New) The communications system of claim 56 wherein the signaling processor is configured to process the initial address message to access a service control point to select the asynchronous connection.

65. (New) The communications system of claim 56 wherein the first connection is unavailable for the second call due to high traffic.

66. (New) A method of operating a communication system comprising a first switching system coupled to a first connection and to a second connection and a second switching system coupled to the first connection and to a third connection, the method comprising:

- transferring first communications for a first call from the first switching system over the first connection to the second switching system;

- transferring second communications for a second call from the first switching system over the second connection when the first connection is unavailable for the second call;

- receiving the second communications for the call in the second switching system over the third connection,

- receiving an initial address message for the second call from a second link into a signaling processor and processing the initial address message to select an asynchronous connection;

- transferring a control message indicating the asynchronous connection from the signaling processor over a first link to an asynchronous matrix;

- receiving the second communications for the second call over the second connection into the asynchronous matrix; and

- in the asynchronous matrix, routing the second communications for the second call to the third connection using the asynchronous connection in response to the control message.

67. (New) The method of claim 66 wherein the first connection, the second connection, and the third connection use a time division multiplex protocol and further comprising:

- in the asynchronous matrix, converting the communications for the second call from the time division multiplex protocol to an asynchronous protocol and converting the communications for the second call from the asynchronous protocol back to the time division multiplex protocol.

68. (New) The method of claim 66 further comprising:

- converting the communications for the second call into an asynchronous protocol.

69. (New) The method of claim 66 further comprising:

canceling echo from the communications for the second call in the asynchronous matrix.

70. (New) The method of claim 66 further comprising:

processing the initial address message in the signaling processor to select echo cancellation, indicating the echo cancellation in the control message, and canceling echo from the second communications for the second call in the asynchronous matrix in response to the control message.

71. (New) The method of claim 66 further comprising:

processing the initial address message in the signaling processor to select the third connection for the second call and indicating the third connection in the control message.

72. (New) The method of claim 66 further comprising:

processing a called number or a calling number in the initial address message in the signaling processor to select the asynchronous connection.

73. (New) The method of claim 66 wherein the asynchronous matrix is non-resident to the signaling processor.

74. (New) The method of claim 66 further comprising:

processing the initial address message in the signaling processor to access a service control point to select the asynchronous connection.

75. (New) The method claim 66 wherein the first connection is unavailable for the second call due to high traffic.